WHIRRAKEE

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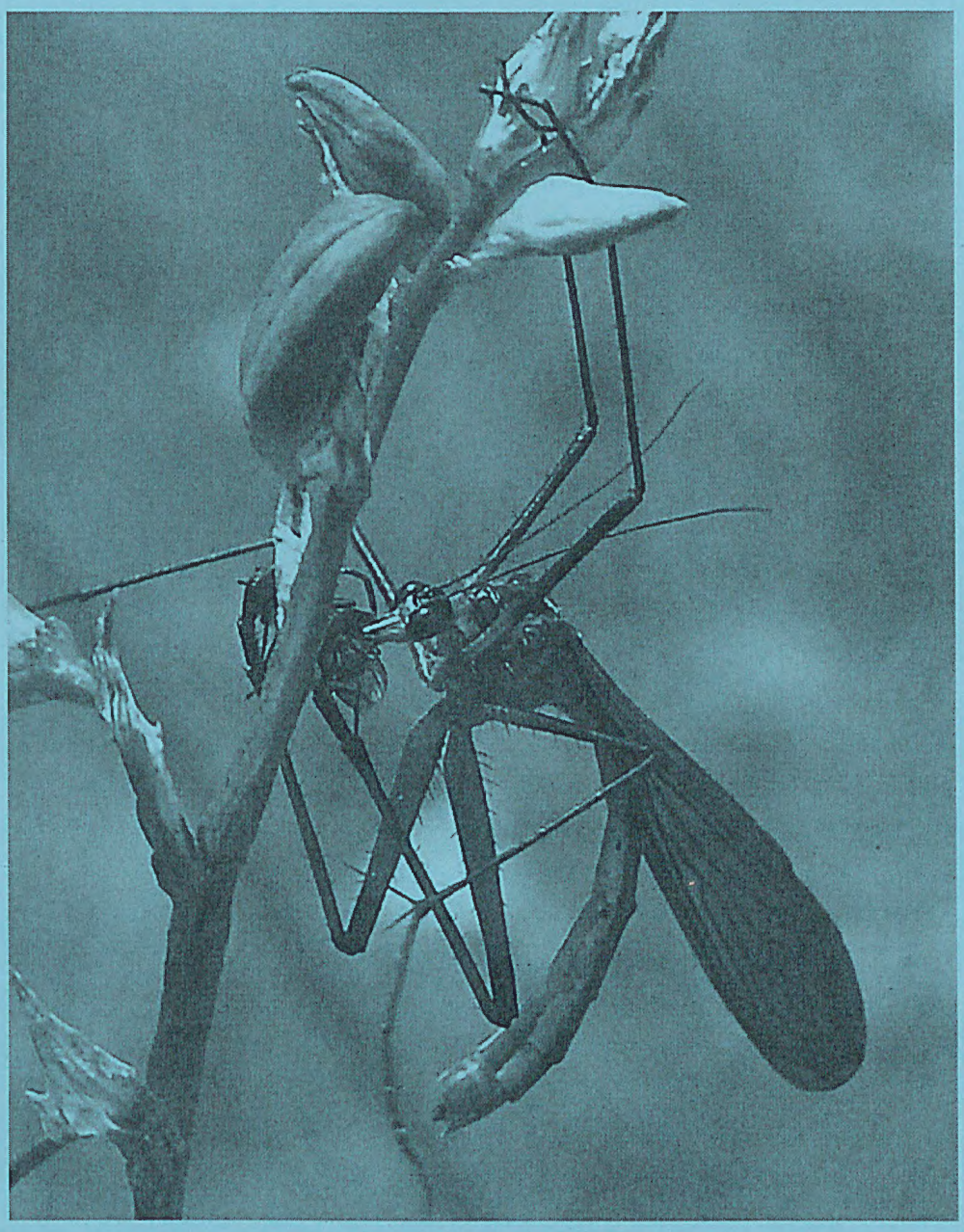

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE BENDIGO FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

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Membership of the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club is open to all those interested in Natural History. The subscription rates are: Single $40; Family $50; Concession: Single $35; Family $40. *Whirrakee* subscription only is $40.

General meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month. The venue for General meetings is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, Old High Street, Golden Square. The meeting starts with members sharing their recent natural history observations. The invited speaker starts at 8:00pm and meetings conclude with supper. The Annual Meeting is held in September.

Committee meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 5:30pm. Members of the Committee are the Office Bearer listed above and the following members: Alistair White, Kerrie Norris, John Lindner, Diana Collier, Jan Orr, Devi Shanty, Simon Hay

Excursions are conducted regularly and are advertised on the diary page of the *Whirrakee*. The assembly point for excursions is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, unless otherwise specified. Several interclub field naturalist campouts are held every year.

The Bendigo Field Naturalists Club is actively involved in local conservation issues. An **indigenous garden** has been established around the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building. Working bees are advertised on the *Whirrakee* diary page.

Bird Observing: Club members conduct regular bird surveys. Please contact Anne Bridley 5442 6188 or Glenise Moors 5439 6254 for details. Special bird observations should be reported to Anne Bridley 5442 6188. To propose bird observing excursions please contact Kerrie Norris 5447 8017.

WHIRRAKEE

Monthly Newsletter of the Bendigo Field Naturalist Club
Vol. 35, No. 10, November 2014
Whirrakee takes its name from the Whirrakee Wattle (*Acacia williamsonii*), which is virtually endemic to the Bendigo region

CONTENT

Item	Contributor	Page
Short notices		3
Colour photo section	various contributors	4
Kamarooka Club Excursion report – October 12	Matt Comer	8

Authors are responsible for the accuracy of the information they use and also for any opinions expressed in their articles. Contributions should be posted or e-mailed to the editor at least two days prior to the last Wednesday of the month. They will be included as soon as possible after they are received, although space restrictions occasionally require shortening of articles or holding them over till the following edition of *Whirrakee*.
Articles in *Whirrakee* may be reproduced, but permission should be obtained from the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club, and acknowledgment should be given to the author and the Club. Some back issues are still available on request.

Editor's Note
Even though many wild flowers have stopped blooming, insects and birds are still very active in the bush and in the garden and very enjoyable to observe, study and learn from (the front page and the colour pages of this edition prove this with some wonderful images). Leaf shapes are also something we do not really appreciate enough, so I am presently enjoying all the fresh new leaves and their amazing shapes. There will be a Whirrakee *in December (so keep your photos coming), but none in January. If you want to advertise any event for January 2015, it will thus need to go into the last edition for 2014.*
Both the treasurers report and presidents report for the previous year were mailed directly to all members, but please let us know if you have missed out and want to view a copy.

Front page photographer: Joy Clusker
This amazing, seemingly double-jointed insect is a Hanging Fly, *Harpobittacus* sp (also called Scorpion Fly), from the Order Mecoptera. The feature of this carnivorous fly is that it hangs from its front legs and catches prey with its stronger hind legs. Males need to catch prey, not just for themselves, but also to offer as a nuptial to prospective females. Therefore, our pictured fly may be eating its food parcel or wrapping it up ready for an offering.
The interesting thing is that if the male's offering is too small, the female will eat it and leave before the male has had a chance to mate. Thus evolution has worked it such that a particular size of nuptial gift is optimal, offering the best chance of successful mating with the least effort in catching and handling the prey involved. Marvellous, as usual!

Short Notices

Speaker syllabus for 2015

Ideas for new speakers for 2015 are still welcome. Ben Goonan, our syllabus coordinator is looking forward to hearing some great suggestions.

Membership fees were due in September
If you have not paid up, please do so now, otherwise you might miss out on the *Whirrakee*

From our club librarian, Diana Collier

For the BFNC book collection, Diana has bought second hand copies of
Munro, John P.
1. *How to conduct meetings (64pp).* [Munro is a well reputed author on this subject].
2. *Chairing and running meetings.* Included are some guides for *Public speaking*.

For your information, a number of new books are being considered for purchase at the moment. They are:

• Victoria's greenhoods and rustyhoods
Kuiter, Rudie H.*Seaford: Aquatic Photographics: 2013.*

• Victoria's spider orchids.
Kuiter, Rudie H.*Seaford: Aquatic Photographics: (2013 second edition, reprint).*

• Victoria's orchids: quick-guide to: sun orchids, greenhoods, greencombs, diuris, mountain spider-orchids, hyacinths, potato orchids.
Kuiter, Rudie H.*Seaford: Aquatic Photographics: 2012.*

• Victoria's small Caladenias
Kuiter, Rudie H.*Seaford: Aquatic Photographics: 2012.*

• Wild orchids of Victoria, Australia
Jeans, Jeffrey and Gary Backhouse.*Seaford: Aquatic Photographics: 2006.*

• Flowers of the Mallee north west Victoria
Mallee Wildflower Committee.*[Ouyen]: Mallee Wildflower Committee, [2004].*

Don't forget that the club has an extensive library and borrowing is welcome and encouraged.

Nestbox inspection Camera

by Kerrie Norris

The club has recently acquired a pole camera to assist members involved in fauna monitoring programs. The Rationale for purchase included:

- Enhance educational and observation experience of membership
- Less disruption to fauna utilising nestboxes (c/f clunky ladder and opening of nestbox lid) and
- Safer method of nestbox inspection/ monitoring.
- More inclusive for young, aging and less physically able members to participate (c/f ladder)

The camera was shown to members at the October general meeting. If you would like to be involved in monitoring programs that the club has been invited to participate in, or have suggestions for use, please see Kerrie Norris at the monthly meeting or phone 5447 8017.

Wildlife wars in South Africa and Australia

The Western Australian government's experiment with shark culling and Northern Territory croc hunting after human attacks are just two examples of what one expert believes are 'wildlife wars' taking place around the world.

Professor Justin O'Riain is a behavioural ecologist from the University of Cape Town who spoke to the ABC when he was in Sydney, see the transcript at
http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/bushtelegraph/wildlife-wars/5765242

Brilliant Spring colours
Photos by Joy Clusker (all but the *Tetratheca* are from Mandurang, 20/10 2014)

Above: *Prostanthera saxicola*, Slender Mint Bush

Right: *Xerochrysum viscosum*, Shiny Everlasting with beetle. It is great to catch an insect interacting with flowers; speculating what it is doing there (feeding, waiting for a mate?) adds a whole new dimension to an image

Below: *Tetratheca ciliata* (Black-eyed Susan) has had a brilliant season, at Notley's picnic area (and elsewhere)

Below: *Gompholobium ecostatum*
Dwarf Wedge Pea

The old tip site (North Bendigo) – a paradise for birds (Photos by Michael Angove, 19/10/14)

Spotted Pardalote

Kookaburra

Scarlet Robin

Rainbow Bee-eaters

Superb Fairy Wren

Weebill

Invertebrates are also active in Spring…

Above: male French's huntsman *Isopedella frenchi*

Right: The black house spider *Badumna robusta* normally stays in its web except to get prey that has become entangled in the web. Be careful with this species as its bite can cause necrotic ulcers
(spider photos by Jenny Shield)

A caterpillar (left) and moth (right below) from the Grampians The ID of both species is not known. Please send in information about them if you can (photos by Sarah Floyd)

Below: Blue-banded bee, *Amegilla cingulata*, ready to sip nectar or just finished? Photo by Michael Angove)

One Tree Hill NP (proposed burn area) by Karen Thomas (taken at the beginning of October)

Stackhousia monogyna, Creamy candles, with visitor

Calochilus paludosus, Red Beard Orchid

Caladenia cucullata, Hooded Caladenia

Pycnosorus chrysanthus Golden Billy Buttons

Club Excursion, October 12 to Kamarooka
by Matt Comer

For the October club excursion sixteen members ventured out to the Kamarooka section of the Greater Bendigo National Park for some general botanising and birdwatching lead by myself. The weather was fine. As the day progressed it warmed up and the winds increased in the afternoon.
Our first stop was near the edge of the forest, along Kamarooka East Rd (I've also heard it called Bagshot North Rd and Clay Rd). It is an area of Mallee vegetation with all four local Mallee eucalypts present but a predominance of Kamarooka Mallee (*Eucalyptus froggattii*). The understorey features Scarlet Mint Bush (*Prostanthera aspalathoides*) and Clammy Daisy Bush (*Olearia decurrens*). It is also a good spot to see Yellow Plumed Honeyeater.
Next stop was at the northern edge of the forest where a fuel reduction burn has been carried out. One section was clearly burnt very intensely, as evidenced by the loss of the tree canopy, among other effects. In this area there has been a notable response of herbaceous plants germinating or re-sprouting since the fire in the absence of competition from the shrub and tree layer, and probably due to the ash bed left behind. There is a diverse range of species present, including many exotic and native species. I did not get into the pros and cons of burning too much but rather was simply interested in the botanical response/ display at the site. It is quite interesting, lush and diverse (I even find the array of weeds quite interesting). There was plenty of discussion had amongst the group on the fire issue as well, with the effects of burning and different types of fire being clearly evident.

We made three short stops to look at Quandong (*Santalum acuminatum*), Senna (*Senna artimisioides*) in full bloom and Emu bush (*Eremophila longifolia*), a couple of very old plants of this species, which is very rare in our district. Lunch was enjoyed at Mulga Dam, followed by completing the 1 km loop walking track nearby. Our last stop was along Campbell Rd at a well known birding spot.

On this day the birds were not co-operating though, due probably to the time of day, the heat of the afternoon and the building winds. The plant life was diverse along here, being an area of low, dense mallee with a heathy understorey. A couple of people commented on the rich flora at this site.
Thanks to Jan Orr and Anne Bridley for supplying the following bird and plant lists

Bird List
The morning was cloudless with next to no wind and warm.
The birds are listed when calling. Where sighted they are shown as * The birds are listed in the order they were heard, giving a rough idea of their prevalence at each stop.

Kamarooka East Rd. Sighted while driving:
White Necked Herons x8
White-faced Heron x1
Both species were feeding in paddock grass

Stop 1, Kamarooka East Rd. at the start of the GB National Park
Black-chinned Honeyeater
Yellow-plumed Honeyeater *
Red Wattlebird
Willy Wagtail *
Grey Currawong
Magpie *
Magpie Lark
Crested Bellbird
Superb Fairy Wren
Eastern Rosella
Galah *
Diamond Firetail *
Grey Shrike-thrush
Spotted Pardalote

Stop 2, Crnr Kamarooka East Rd& Angle Rd
Where we walked into what's left of a Grey-box woodland after last summer's very hot fuel reduction burn.
Mistletoe Bird
Western Gerygone
Galah *
Jackie Winter
Rufus Whistler
Buff-rumped Thornbill
Chestnut-rumped Thornbill *

Restless Fly-catcher
Magpie *
Red-rumped Parrot
Australian Raven
Brown Tree-creeper
Noisy Miner
Red-capped Robin
Yellow-rumped Thornbill *
Diamond Firetail *
Shining-bronze Cuckoo
Varied Sitella
Owlet-nightjar
Weebill
Peaceful Dove

Stop 3 Camp Rd. Quandongs (10 minutes)
Rufus Whistler
Jackie Winter
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike

Stop 4 Camp Rd. Senna *(10 minutes)*
Rufus Whistler
Grey Shrike-thrush
Weebill
Crested Bell-bird

Stop 5 a Camp Rd Eremophila longifolia *(30 minutes)*
Grey Fantail
Crested Bellbird
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike

Stop 5 b Camp Rd Acacia difformis *Mystery wattle (10 minutes)*
Crested Bellbird
Fuscous Honeyeater
Brown-headed Honeyeater
Chestnut-rumped Thornbill
Weebill
White-winged Chough
Kookaburra *

Stop 6 Camp Rd Mulga Dam for lunch (12:45-1:45 pm)
Fuscous Honeyeater *
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater *
Willy Wagtail *
Restless Flycatcher *
Noisy Miner *
Wedge-tailed Eagle *
Dusky Woodswallow *

Mulga Dam Loop Walk (1:45 - 2:45 pm)
(Weather now quite warm and a bit sultry, some small clouds appearing)
Black-faced Cockoo-shrike *
? raven
Fuscous Honeyeater *
Grey Currawong
Eastern Rosella *
Red-rumped Parrot *
Red Wattlebird *
Brown Treecreeper *
Grey Shrike Thrush
Yellow Robin * (2 adults & 1 juvenile)

Campbells Rd Old gravel-scrape (3:00 pm)
(Weather, now strong gusty NW wind and cloud building as the change approaches)
White-fronted Honeyeater
White-eared Honeyeater
Yellow-plumed Honeyeater
Golden Whistler
Tawny-crowned Honeyeater
Grey Shrike-thrush
? Fairy Wren
Rufus Whistler
Galah *
Shy Hylacola

This spot is usually a very good place to see birds as they call and display however on this day they were calling from deep in the vegetation.
The excursion concluded at 3:30

Highlights
The 3 Yellow Robins at Mulga Dam and hearing Crested Bellbirds at so many of the stops.

Please note: This list is a collaborative effort from Pam and John Land, Peter Little, Pam Sheean, Anne Bridley and Jan Orr

Plant List

**Moraea setifolia*	Thread Iris
**Romulea rosea*	Onion-grass
Arthropodium minus	Small Vanilla-lily
Dianella admixta	Black-anther Flax-lily
Wurmbea dioica	Early Nancy
Pterostylis pusilla	Small Rustyhood

Thelymitra sp or x	a dotted Sun-orchid
Austrostipa aristiglumis	Plains Spear-grass
Lomandra sp	Mat-rush
Carpobrotus modestus	Inland Pigface
Ptilotus spathulatus	
Hydrocotyle laxiflora	Pennywort
**Arctotheca calendula*	Capeweed
Calocephalus citreus	Lemon Beauty-heads
Calotis cuneifolia	Blue Burr-daisy
Cassinia arcuata	Drooping Cassinia
Chrysocephalum apiculatum	Common Everlasting
C. semipapposum	Clustered Everlasting
**Cotula* sp	
Helichrysum luteoalbum	Jersey Cudweed
Olearia teretifolia	Cypress Daisy-bush
Olearia decurrens	Clammy Daisy-bush
Ozothamnus obcordatus	Grey Everlasting
Pycnosorus chrysanthes	Drumsticks
Rhodanthe corymbiflora	Grey Sunray
Senecio pinnatifolius	Variable Groundsel
Xerochrysum viscosum	Sticky Everlasting
Lepidium sp	Peppercress
Stenopetalum lineare	Narrow Thread-petal
Senna artemisioides	
Lobelia gibbosa	Tall Lobelia
Wahlenbergia luteola	Yellowish Bluebell
**Petrorhagia dubia*	Velvety Pink
Allocasuarina muelleriana	Slaty Sheoak
Einadia hastata	Saloop
Convolvulus sp	Bindweed
Brachyloma daphnoides	Daphne Heath
Daviesia benthamii	Bentham's Bitter-pea
Dillwynia sericea	Showy Parrot-pea
Templetonia stenophylla	Leafy Templetonia
Pelargonium sp	Stork's-bill
Goodenia benthamiana	Clasping Goodenia
Glischrocaryon behrii	Golden Pennants
Prostanthera aspalathoides	Scarlet Mint-bush
Prostanthera denticulata	Rough Mint-bush
Linum marginale	Native Flax
Sida corrugata	Variable Sida
Acacia acinacea	Gold-dust Wattle
Acacia brachybotrya	Grey Mulga
Acacia difformis	Drooping Wattle
Acacia montana	Mallee Wattle
Acacia pycnantha	Golden Wattle
Acacia pycnantha x williamsonii	
Acacia williamsonii	Whirrakee Wattle
Eremophila longifolia	Berrigan
Myoporum montanum	Waterbush
Eucalyptus behriana	Bull Mallee
Eucalyptus froggattii	Kamarooka Mallee
Eucalyptus microcarpa	Grey Box
Eucalyptus polybractea	Blue Mallee
Eucalyptus viridis	Green Mallee
Euromyrtus ramosissima	Rosy Heath-myrtle
Leptospermum myrsinoides	Silky Teatree
Melaleuca decussata	Totem-poles
Melaleuca lanceolata	Moonah
Melaleuca uncinata	Broombush
Melaleuca wilsonii	Violet Honey-myrtle
Micromyrtus ciliata	Heath-myrtle
Pittosporum angustifolium	Weeping Pittosporum
Plantago sp	Plantain
Grevillea alpina	Cat's Claws
Grevillea sp.	
Correa reflexa	Common Correa
Crowea exalata	Small Crowea
Philotheca difformis	Small-leaf Wax-flower
Choretrum glomeratum	Common Sour-bush
Santalum acuminatum	Sweet Quandong
Dodonea viscosa	Sticky Hop-bush
**Lycium ferocissimum*	African Box-thorn
Solanum simile	Oondoroo

Editor's note: A very impressive plant list, and of the birds, I might have seen three or four, if I had been out there without experts. This is a great reminder how beneficial it is to go out with experienced field naturalists, so let's hope we have many more excursions like this in the new year.

Two curlews, an antechinus, a bottlebrush and the black gum – should they be listed as threatened? Dept of Environment invited comment to the Threatened Species Scientific Committee on the status of two species of bird, two plant species, and a marsupial. See http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/nominations/comment

[N.B. Catastrophic recent declines in populations of the curlew sandpiper and eastern curlew have resulted in their nomination for threatened status, based on work led by researchers at the NERP Environmental Decisions Hub.see: http://www.nerpdecisions.edu.au/nerp-latest-news/85-long-distance-aussie-travellers-under-threat.html]

Diary

All Club meetings are held at the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, Old High St Golden Square, unless otherwise indicated.

Wednesday November 12 7.30pm
Associate Professor Andrew Bennett, Deakin University, will talk to us about: 'Decline and recovery? Response of woodland birds to the Millennium drought'

Wednesday, December 10 6.00pm
Once again, please note the earlier meeting time for the December meeting. The club usually has a get-together with everyone bringing a dish and their own crockery/cutlery /drink and merriment. The collection of dishes is usually so absolutely delicious, that I advise you not to eat that day…

Wednesday, February 11 7.30pm
First meeting of 2015.

November Excursion: Sunday 12 October
For those of you who might have been wondering about the lack of information for this Melbourne Cup weekend excursion…it has been POSTPONED due to unforeseen circumstances. Apologies for the late notice

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Family Nature Club
The last outing of the year occurs in November and will be a fabulous fossil fossick with Phil Dyson. Numbers are limited, so get in early. The Nature Club activities will continue in February 2015, so look out for announcements or check out their website.
Registration:
Bendigonatureclub@gmail.com or 5443-1326
http://bendigofamilynatureclub.blogspot.com/

Bendigo Native Plant Group meeting.
All interested people are welcome to come along. Meeting starts at 7:30pm on the third Tuesday of the month, Golden Square Senior Citizens Hall.
Next meeting: 18th of November

Wildlife Rescue & Information Network Inc.
W.R.I.N. is an organisation dedicated to the care of orphaned, sick or injured native animals. It is fully endorsed by the Dept of Sustainability and Environment.
Please call our Emergency Number for Help for Fauna in Need. Phone: 0419 356433.
WRIN meetings held on the 1st Saturday of the month at 1pm the Golden Square Senior Citizens Hall

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Nature is speaking
A group called 'Conservation International has produced a series of films with voices from all sorts of famous people. The series of films is called 'nature is speaking' and it presently covers 'water', 'rainforest', 'soil', 'ocean' 'coral reef', 'the redwood', 'mother nature'. Check it out at:
http://natureisspeaking.org/home.html#MeetTheVoices

…time for a swim (photo by M. Angove)